

Promoting Women, Peace and Security in International, Regional and National Arenas

Workshop for Ireland's Second National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325

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Facilitator:

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The following strategic objectives, actions and indicators are recommended in response to the question: '**How can Ireland best give voice to the WPS agenda?**'

Overall Strategic Objectives:

1. Promotion of the WPS agenda through Education:

- Specific means through which to achieve this would include:
- Department of Education representative to be invited onto the 1325 NAP consultative group and monitoring group (as recommended by President Higgins at the launch of the Mid-term Review of Ireland's first NAP at the Aras in June 2013).
 - WPS should be included in both primary and secondary school curricula – through a class dedicated to education for citizenship; human rights; and gender equality.
 - Funding for community groups who work with women affected by conflict (migrant, refugee, and northern Irish women) to empower them to take on more leadership and decision-making roles within their communities.
 - Education is a necessary underpinning of any promotion activity Ireland undertakes on WPS.

2. Promotion of WPS through EU membership:

- Security Policy and Peacekeeping:
- Ireland to play a lead role in implementing 1325 in EU policies through the Common Security & Defence Unit of the EU.

- For example, the second NAP could include an action on WPS in all military missions.
- Irish representatives should advocate on the need to mainstream 1325/WPS into all training programmes for soldiers/peacekeepers. For example, Ireland took the lead in initiating a training programme on 1325 & humanitarian law for soldiers in Mali, however, if Ireland had not been at the decision-making table it is likely that training programme would not have taken place.
- Therefore, mainstreaming WPS training into EU led missions should be a priority of the second NAP.
- Currently, weekly reports are supplied by Mission Commanders and six-monthly reports are discussed at EU level; but these do not have the WPS agenda mainstreamed into the reporting process.
- The second Irish NAP should include a new action: to take the lead in requesting reports from the EU military missions on the WPS/1325 agenda.
- This could also be done with UN missions, and through NATO, but it is recognized that Ireland can wield most influence at EU level.

3. Promotion of WPS within and between Ireland and Northern Ireland:

- It was noted that civil servants in Northern Ireland are not aware of the two actions in Ireland's NAP on WPS and NI.
- It was noted that the lessons and experience of NI needs to be better understood and communicated within the South to promote relationship building. If Ireland is promoting itself internationally as an expert on peace building then it needs to communicate the ongoing lessons learned from the conflict and education is crucial to achieving this.
- The second NAP should include an action on creating an island wide conversation on how the conflict has impacted the relationship between the North and the South of Ireland and how we can work together to build sustainable peace.
- Gender mainstreaming is beginning to happen within Northern Ireland government, and it is recommended that 'cross-learning' between government departments (North and South) is undertaken to share progress, tools and methods on gender mainstreaming and to build relationships across the island.

4. Public campaigns on WPS (Nationally, Internationally, Regionally)

National Campaigns:

- Ireland needs an action within the second NAP that proactively publicizes its work on promoting on the WPS agenda.
- A dedicated website could provide a platform for the DFAT and other groups to highlight their work in a transparent and inclusive way.
 - Action/indicator: the Irish government to make available on a dedicated website: speeches, reports, documents, videos of speeches, information about launch dates for various programmes/projects on WPS/1325. This will provide a clear map over a number of years of the progress Ireland is making in advocating on behalf of WPS/1325. By providing this transparency of the efforts Ireland is making internationally will provide

specific outputs from the NAP which can be linked to outcomes in future monitoring and evaluation exercises.

- The need for a public conversation was emphasized – it was noted that conferences are great as far as they go but that the conversation must be extended to other audiences - need to bring other stakeholders to the table.
- Strategies to achieve this would include:
- Oireachtas review of both the final review and the mid-term review of the first 1325 NAP – both documents would be placed before the houses of the Oireachtas to enhance political and public debate. This would raise awareness of the NAP amongst politicians and hopefully increase media coverage. The new NAP should also be laid before both houses of Oireachtas
- Oireachtas members from each of the committees relevant to the NAP (Equality, Justice & Defence; Good Friday Agreement; Foreign Affairs; Education?) should be invited to sit on the 1325 NAP consultative group to encourage wider ownership, responsibility and accountability toward the NAP.
- There needs to be an action in the NAP that broadens communication on the NAP to include a wider community of grassroots women, civil servants, journalists, and politicians.
- Consultations need to take place with women who have experienced conflict first hand in Ireland/NI/peacekeeping missions/overseas aid and development.

Internationally:

- At present a communication gap exists between the DFAT and parties interested in and engaged in the WPS agenda e.g. members of our group were unaware of the Irish donation of €100K to UNWOMEN to fund the Secretary General Global Study on WPS, neither were we aware of the launch of the project in New York by Ireland and U.A.E
- It was noted that a gap exists in gathering information and data from civilians in post conflict situations. This was noted in the Mid-term Review and in the recent UNIFIL report 2014 (funded by the Irish government). The impact and progress of WPS programmes can only be fully assessed if the experiences of those affected are documented. It is recommended that the DFAT take the lead internationally by pushing for clearer mandates on 1325 within missions; and by promoting this aspect of the agenda; and by making concerted efforts to gather gender perspectives from both women and men in the regions where Ireland is actively implementing the WPS agenda.
- It is recommended that Ireland's Ambassador, David Donoghue (through the permanent mission in Geneva) lobbies for the gathering of gender perspectives in all NAPs.
- Following on from the success of the Emma Watson presentation to the UN on the launch of the 'He for She' campaign it is recommended that the WPS Agenda also secure celebrity ambassadors to raise awareness of the resolution and the work that is being undertaken both nationally, and

globally. It was suggested that a celebrity team (man and woman) such as Colin Farrell and Saoirse Ronan be approached. This would represent the gendered nature of conflict and post-conflict situations and highlight the importance of including both women and men in decision-making and leadership on peace and security issues. It was recommended that this becomes an action within the second NAP.

- WPS should form a central platform for Ireland's 2020 UN Security Council membership campaign.
- Irish representatives at diplomatic level should lobby for 1325 mainstreaming both multilaterally and bilaterally.
- A useful action indicator could be to aim for specific references to 1325 in 70% of our interventions on international or regional resolutions on security issues

Regionally:

- It was noted that Ireland's best option for influencing the regional agenda on WPS is through the EU, specifically the EEAS, the European External Action Service. The EU works with the UN, NATO, and African Union, and Ireland can promote WPS within these regional organizations.
- Ireland can also take on a leadership role in advocating on behalf of creating coherency between EU member NAPs so that gaps are filled and to avoid overlaps and repetition where it is not needed.
